

San Antonio, TX - U.S. Congressman **Ciro Rodriguez (TX-23)** will be part of a U.S. Congressional delegation to Monterrey, Mexico for the annual Mexico-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Meeting this weekend. The group will meet with their Mexican counterparts to discuss a wide range of bilateral issues including immigration, trade, border security, and ways to encourage cooperation across the border. Rodriguez's Congressional district has the largest section of U.S.-Mexico border than any other Member of the House of Representatives at 785 miles.

“I have worked closely with Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) on bills to help to stop illegal activity by cracking down on illegal gunrunning and to address the issue of increased wait times on the border by gathering better data on wait times,” said Rodriguez. We must continue to have the special relationship we have had with Mexico and I will work this weekend to continue that relationship.”

H.R.5869 would enable the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) to hire, train and deploy an additional 80 special agents, enough for at least seven more Project Gunrunner Teams in the border region to investigate and help prosecute individuals that traffic weapons into Mexico. The bill also authorizes \$9.5 million in fiscal years 2009 and 2010 to enhance cooperation between the United States and Mexico.

H.R.4309, the Border Wait Times Study Act would document the economic impacts these wait times are having on the US and its border communities on the northern and southern borders. This legislation would require the study to be completed within six months of the enactment of the legislation.

“Commerce is incredibly important to the economies of the border communities and also to the San Antonio area,” continued Rodriguez. It's crucial as we protect our citizens and address the concerns of a world where criminals and terrorists have become more technologically savvy, that we continue to allow for successful business and commerce to flow smoothly across the borders.”

In addition to speaking about his bipartisan bills Rodriguez also addressed continued cooperation with Mexican officials on Lake Amistad and the Amistad Dam in Del Rio, Texas and Acuna, Mexico.

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Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez is a former social worker who currently serves on the House Committee on Veterans Affairs and the powerful House Committee on Appropriations. For more information on Congressman Rodriguez please visit <http://rodriguez.house.gov/>